

Claims:

1. A system for displaying a user's personal digital photographic images, the system comprising a combination of:

5 a gaming console for playing a video game; the gaming console including a communications means for connecting the gaming console to a wide area network;

a domestic visual display unit for displaying the video game to the user when connected with the console; and

10 a permanent data store connected to the wide area network, the permanent data store storing the user's digitised photographic image data and comprising transmission means for transmitting part or all of the user's digitised photographic image data to the gaming console;

15 a portable digital data store including a viewing application program, the viewing application program comprising a communications program for receiving the user's digitised photographic image data from the permanent data store via the communications means and the wide area network, the viewing application program being arranged to configure the gaming console to display the digitised photographic image data on the domestic visual display unit when the user's digitised photographic image data has been received by the gaming console.

20 2. A system according to Claim 1, wherein the domestic visual display unit comprises a television.

25 3. A system according to Claim 1, wherein the viewing application program is arranged to enable multiple images of the digitised photographic image data to be displayed to the user simultaneously and a gaming controller of the gaming console is arranged to enable the user to navigate through the multiple images.

30 4. A system according to Claim 3, wherein the multiple images are in the form of thumbnail images.

5. A system according to Claim 1, wherein the viewing application program comprises a plurality of user-selectable digital effects algorithms for altering the presentation of

the user's digitised photographic image data on the domestic visual display unit.

6. A system according to Claim 1, wherein the portable digital data store comprises a plurality of user-selectable viewing application programs, each program providing a different algorithm for displaying the user's digitised photographic image data in a different way on the domestic visual display unit.

7. A system according to Claim 6, wherein each program is arranged to provide a different photo enhancement of the user's digitised photographic image data.

8. A system according to Claim 1, wherein the communications program is arranged to transmit a user selection command to a remote party.

9. A system according to Claim 1, wherein the gaming console comprises means for receiving and digitising a user's voice into voice data and the communications program is arranged to transmit the voice data over the wide area network to a remote party.

10. A system according to Claim 1, wherein the communications program is arranged to implement compression of data to be transmitted and decompression of data received via the communications means.

11. A system according to Claim 1, wherein the communications program comprises an applet for enabling two-way communications between the gaming console and the remote party.

12. A system according to Claim 11, wherein the applet is arranged to password protect access to part or all of the data to be transmitted by the communications means with the user inputting a password associated with the data to be transmitted.

13. A system according to Claim 11, wherein received data is password protected and the applet is arranged to enable access to part or all of the received data once the user has input a correct password associated with the received data.

14. A system according to Claim 1, further comprising:

a further gaming console for playing a video game; the further gaming console including a further communications means for connecting the further gaming console to the wide area network;

a further domestic visual display unit for displaying the video game to a remote party when connected with the console; and

a further portable digital data store including a further viewing application program, the further viewing application program comprising a further communications program for receiving the user's digitised photographic image data from the permanent data store via the further communications means and the wide area network, the further viewing application program being arranged to configure the further gaming console to display the user's digitised photographic image data on the further domestic visual display unit when the user's digitised photographic image data has been received by the further gaming console.

15. A system according to Claim 14, wherein the further gaming console comprises means for receiving and digitising a third party's voice into voice data and the further communications program is arranged to transmit the voice data over the wide area network to the user.

16. A system according to Claim 14, wherein the further communications program is arranged to implement compression of data to be transmitted and decompression of data received via the further communications means.

17. A system according to Claim 14, wherein the further communications program comprises an applet for enabling two-way communications between the further gaming console of the third party and the gaming console of the user.

18. A system according to Claim 17, wherein received data is password protected and the applet is arranged to enable access to part or all of the received data once the third party has input a correct password associated with the received data.

19. A system for displaying a user's personal digital photographic images, the system comprising a combination of:

a gaming console for playing a video game; the gaming console including a data communications module for connecting the gaming console to a wide area network;

a domestic visual display unit for displaying the video game to the user when connected with the console; and

a permanent data store connected to the wide area network, the permanent data store storing the user's digitised photographic image data and comprising transmission means for transmitting part or all of the user's digitised photographic image data to the gaming console;

a portable digital data store including a plurality of user-selectable viewing application programs and a communications program for receiving the user's digitised photographic image data from the permanent data store via the communications means and the wide area network, the plurality of viewing application programs being arranged to provide different algorithms for displaying the user's digitised photographic image data in different ways and being arranged to configure the gaming console to display the digitised photographic image data on the domestic visual display unit in a user-selected way when the user's digitised photographic image data has been received by the gaming console.

20. A system according to Claim 19, wherein each program is arranged to provide a different photo enhancement of the user's digitised photographic image data.

21. A system for displaying a first user's personal digital photographic images, the system comprising a combination of:

a gaming console for playing a video game; the gaming console including a data communications module for connecting the gaming console to a wide area network;

a domestic visual display unit for displaying the video game to the first user when connected with the console;

a permanent data store connected to the wide area network, the permanent data store storing the first user's digitised photographic image data and comprising

transmission means for transmitting part or all of the first user's digitised photographic image data to the gaming console via the wide area network;

5 a portable digital data store including a viewing application program and a communications program for receiving the first user's digitised photographic image data from the permanent data store via the communications means and the wide area network, the viewing application program being arranged to configure the gaming console to display the digitised photographic image data on the domestic visual display unit when the first user's digitised photographic image data has been received by the gaming console;

10 a further gaming console for playing a video game; the further gaming console including a further data communications module for connecting the further gaming console to the wide area network;

a further domestic visual display unit for displaying the video game to a second user when connected with the console; and

15 a further portable digital data store including a further viewing application program, the further viewing application program comprising a further communications program for receiving the first user's digitised photographic image data from the permanent data store via the further communications means and the wide area network, the further viewing application program being arranged to
20 configure the further gaming console to display the first user's digitised photographic image data on the further domestic visual display unit when the first user's digitised photographic image data has been received by the further gaming console.

22. A system according to Claim 21, wherein the further gaming console comprises
25 means for receiving and digitising the second user's voice into voice data and the further communications program is arranged to transmit the voice data over the wide area network to the first user.

23. A system according to Claim 21, wherein the further communications program is
30 arranged to implement compression of data to be transmitted and decompression of data received via the further data communications module.

24. A system according to Claim 21, wherein the further communications program

comprises an applet for enabling two-way communications between the further gaming console of the second user and the gaming console of the first user.

25. A system according to Claim 21, wherein received data is password protected and the applet is arranged to enable access to part or all of the received data once the second user has input a correct password associated with the received data.

26. A method of viewing a user's photographic image data, the method comprising:

digitising the user's photographic image data;

selecting a viewing application program for viewing the user's digitised photographic image data;

recording the user's digitised photographic image data in a permanent data store, the permanent data store being connected to a wide area network;

recording the selected viewing application program and a communications program onto a portable digital data store having a format suitable for use in a video gaming console;

running the selected viewing application program and the communications program on a video gaming console by reading the portable digital data store;

retrieving the user's digitised photographic image data from the permanent data store by using the communications program to connect to the wide area network; and

displaying the retrieved digitised photographic image data using the selected viewing application program on a domestic visual display unit connected to the video gaming console.